

EXECUTIVE SESSION
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: ANATOLI SAMOCHORNOV

Tuesday, November 28, 2017

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, the Capitol, commencing at 2:10 p.m.

Present: Representatives Ros-Lehtinen, Himes, Quigley, Swalwell, and Castro.

Appearances:

For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

For ANATOLI SAMOCHORNOV:

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[REDACTED] Thanks, all.

Good afternoon. This is a transcribed interview of Anatoli Samochornov. And if I mispronounced it, which I probably did, I'm sorry. Thank you for speaking to us today.

For the record, I'm [REDACTED] [REDACTED] counsel at the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for the majority. Also present today are numerous members and staff who will introduce themselves as these proceedings get underway.

Before we begin, I wanted to state a few things for the record. The questioning will be conducted by members and staff. During the course of this interview, members and staff may ask questions during their allotted time period. Some questions may seem basic, but that is because we need to clearly establish facts and understand the situation.

Please do not assume we know any facts that you have previously disclosed as part of any other investigation or review. This interview will be conducted at the unclassified level.

During the course of this interview, we will take any breaks that you desire.

We ask that you give complete and fulsome replies to questions based on your best recollection. If a question is unclear, or you're uncertain in your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

You're entitled to have counsel present with you during this interview, and I see that you do. At this time, if counsel could please state their names for the record.

MR. KRANTZ: Larry Krantz from Krantz & Berman on behalf of the witness. And with me is Nicolas Rovner, who is a law school graduate, not yet admitted to the bar but recently joined our firm.

MR. QUIGLEY: Hurry. Hurry.

██████████ Thank you.

The interview will be transcribed. There is a reporter making a record of these proceedings, so we can easily consult a written compilation of your answers. Because the reporter cannot record gestures, we ask that you answer all questions verbally. If you forget to do this, you will be reminded to do so. You may also be asked to spell certain terms or unusual phrases.

Consistent with the committee's rules of procedure, you and your counsel, upon request, will have a reasonable opportunity to inspect the transcript of this interview in order to determine whether your answers were correctly transcribed.

The transcript will remain in the committee's custody, and the committee also reserves the right to request your return for additional questions should the need arise.

The process for the interview will be follows: The minority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions, then the majority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions. Immediately thereafter, we will take a 5-minute break, if you desire. After which time, the minority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions and the majority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions.

These 15-minute rounds will continue until the questioning has been completed. The time will be adhered to by all sides, and the time will also be kept with 5- and 1-minute warnings given respectively.

To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you do not discuss the interview with

anyone other than your attorney.

You are reminded that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff.

And lastly, the record will reflect that you are voluntarily participating in this interview, which will be under oath.

Mr. Samochornov, could you raise your right hand to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: So help me God.

██████████ Thank you.

And just a reminder for you, the witness, and counsel, if you could make sure the green light is on on the microphone when you're speaking so the court reporter -- the reporter can hear the conversation.

Mr. Swalwell, over to you, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

Welcome, Mr. Samochornov. My name is Eric Swalwell. I am one of the members of the committee.

Mr. Samochornov, where were you born?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was born in what was then Soviet Union in the what was then city of Gorki.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And how long did you live in Gorki?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: On and off for about 23 years.

MR. SWALWELL: Where did you go after the 23 years?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I came to Seattle, Washington, to the United States.

MR. SWALWELL: What brought you to the United States?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was an exchange student.

MR. SWALWELL: Through which program?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I -- actually, at that time, there was no program. I came as a visiting scholar, but then I became a full-time student at the graduate school at the University of Washington.

MR. SWALWELL: What year was that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I came here in 1991, and I became a full-time student in 1992.

MR. SWALWELL: What did you study?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Business.

MR. SWALWELL: And where did you graduate from?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I graduated from the University of Washington in 1994.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. What did you do after you graduated the University of Washington?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I worked for a Seattle-based oil services business, and I traveled. I went back to Russia a couple of times. But after a year, I left the job and went on to come to New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Which Seattle-based oil business was that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It was called Universal Ogden (ph).

MR. SWALWELL: And which, if any, oil or energy businesses would you work with when you would travel to Russia?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: What the business did is to supply housing and food, so I did not work for specifically oil businesses but rather provided a service.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Have you kept, since your birth, a Russian citizenship?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And also are you a U.S. citizen?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. When was the last time you visited Russia?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Spring of this year.

MR. SWALWELL: What was the purpose of that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was invited to join the team of lawyers from Gwenamagno (ph) to help in preparation for the witnesses for the upcoming trial for my client, Ms. Veselnitskaya.

MR. SWALWELL: Where did you visit in spring of this year?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I went to Moscow, and I also visited my sister in what is now called Mishinofort (ph), formally Gorki.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And when you went to Moscow in the spring of this year, where did you stay in Moscow?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: In a hotel.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Which one?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Hilton. Hilton something. I don't recall. It was on Linengrazki (ph) prospect.

MR. SWALWELL: How long did you stay there?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: To the best of my recollection, 4 or 5 days.

MR. SWALWELL: Was the trip paid for by -- well, who paid for the trip?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Ms. Veselnitskaya paid for my tickets and for my accommodation while I was in Moscow. And I paid for my own trip to see my

sister.

MR. SWALWELL: Prior to that spring 2017 trip to Moscow and to see your sister, when had you last been to Russia?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: 2011.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And what was the purpose of that visit?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I went to bury my mother who died in July 2011.

MR. SWALWELL: I'm sorry to hear that.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Thank you.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you remain in contact with any Russians today or through the past 5 years?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Well, I have my classmates with whom I went to class via Facebook. We occasionally exchange messages, and I've seen some of them when I was in Moscow last.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And, Mr. Samochornov, how did you become an interpreter?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I actually attended for my first master's degree a philology school in Gorki and obtained a degree in interpreting.

MR. SWALWELL: What year did that occur?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: '91.

MR. SWALWELL: Now, you mentioned Ms. Veselnitskaya. When did you first meet her?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I met her sometime in October 2015.

MR. SWALWELL: What was the circumstances of that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was asked to come and interpret for a deposition in preparation to the deposition at the civil trial.

MR. SWALWELL: Where did you meet her?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I met her in the offices of Baker Hostettler.

MR. SWALWELL: In what city?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: In New York.

MR. SWALWELL: What were you doing in New York at the time?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I reside -- I lived in New York City at that time. I presently live in the environs of New York City.

MR. SWALWELL: Today you live in New York City?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Not anymore, no. I live in [REDACTED], New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Where were you living in 2013 when you met Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: 2015, I lived on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And can you just describe for me how it was that you met her through Baker Hostettler?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I actually did not meet her through Baker Hostettler. I got a call from a colleague who was working with Ms. Veselnitskaya and Baker Hostettler at the time, who couldn't work certain dates, and he asked me if I could step in.

MR. SWALWELL: And when you say "colleague," do you mean an interpreter colleague?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And to your knowledge, had this interpreter colleague had a prior relationship, working relationship with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I do not know.

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MR. SWALWELL: Can you describe for us translation services that you have provided over the past 5 years. What have some of your clients been?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That's going to be a long list. Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits. I worked as a contractor for U.S. Government, so all in all, we're probably talking about maybe over 100 clients.

MR. SWALWELL: Sure. And are we talking about Russian to English and English to Russian translation or any other languages?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I do not work with any other languages. And even though I do offer translations occasionally, if I can make a correction, my proper role is an interpreter, which is basically simultaneous oral interpreting rather than written translations.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you work for the State Department's Office of Language Services?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: To the best of my recollection, I first started in 1997.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. How long have you worked for them?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Since that time.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. So even today, could you be called upon by them to assist?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I have no reason to believe not.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. When was the last time you did work for them?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Spring 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: Would this include work at the United Nations or the U.S. Mission in New York?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I am called to work on what is called the sideline

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events at the United Nations. To give you an example, I interpreted President Obama's summit at the U.N. on refugees, and, I believe, on peacekeepers. Those are the two events -- kind of events that would happen at the U.N., but I don't often work at the United Nations.

MR. SWALWELL: Any time while working at the United Nations have you been approached by any Russian Government officials?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever interacted with any Russian Government officials in your capacity --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. Not to my knowledge, no.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know if Ms. Veselnitskaya knew of your prior work for the State Department?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I believe so, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: What makes you think that she knew?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think she saw my resume. I would assume she saw my resume, and it's stated in my resume and on my public LinkedIn.

MR. SWALWELL: When you prepare for an interpreter job, do you typically see the documents in advance that are going to be used in a speech or a meeting so you have an idea of what's going to be --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It's a dream of every interpreter to do that, but it's very seldom -- it happens very seldom. Sometimes at the high-level meetings at the U.N. there are prepared speeches that are given out.

MR. SWALWELL: And is your practice while you're conducting an interpretation, is it to speak verbatim, or do you try and interpret in shorthand? I'm just trying to get a sense of what does the client expect and what is your practice?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: There are several kinds of interpreting. There is consecutive interpreting, and it depends on what the client requires. With Ms. Veselnitskaya, I did kind of a mostly simultaneous voiceover.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever done any lobbying?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: No. Have you ever worked for Aras Agalarov?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know who that is?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you met him?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How do you know who he is?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Well, after the case evolved in the press, I read about who he is.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Emin Agalarov. Have you ever worked for him?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever met him?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever worked for, or with anyone associated with the Crocus Group?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you heard of the Crocus Group?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: How have you heard of them?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Also in the context of, you know, when the media started covering this issue.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever worked for anyone from the Trump Organization?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about the Trump campaign?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about anyone in the Trump family?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever done any work with the Human Rights Accountability Global Initiative Foundation, also known as HRAGIF?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes, I have.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you an officer or a member of that organization?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: When did your work commence for HRAGIF?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think I was on the retainer with them from about April until about end of July --

MR. SWALWELL: Is that April --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: -- of 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: How did you come to be involved with HRAGIF?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: In the course of my work for the Prevezon case, I believe it was Mr. Denis Katsyv who offered me a retainer, and he told me that he's starting this foundation and would I like to work for them.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you mind spelling that name for us.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: D-e-n-i-s, first name. Last name is K-a-t-s-y-v.

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MR. SWALWELL: What was his role with HRAGIF?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was later told that he was one of the people who gave the money for the Foundation.

MR. SWALWELL: Was he a Russian national?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: To the extent of my knowledge, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever met him in person?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Where was that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: In New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And that was in April 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I first met him in -- at the same time I met Ms. Veselnitskaya, in October 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: What did you understand the purpose or the mission statement for HRAGIF to be?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: The mission statement was that -- and, again, it's my understanding that the Foundation wanted to lobby U.S. Congress to review the circumstances that led to Mr. Magnitsky's arrest on imprisonment and eventual death.

MR. SWALWELL: During your work for HRAGIF, did you ever meet an individual named Rinat Akhmetshin?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you first meet Rinat?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: October 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: October 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Excuse me, 2015, at the same time that I -- about

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the same time I met Ms. Veselnitskaya and Mr. Katsyv.

MR. SWALWELL: Where did you meet Rinat?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: At Baker Hostettler's offices in New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Was it the same meeting where you first met Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I think he arrived after the depositions were done and completed, maybe a week after.

MR. SWALWELL: And when you refer to depositions, are you referring to the Prevezon case?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. What was Mr. Akhmetshin's role in that case?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It's not entirely clear for me. I know that he did some work, but I'm not sure what exactly.

MR. SWALWELL: When you met him in October 2015, why did you believe he was in the meeting or in your presence?

MR. KRANTZ: Just let me caution the witness. To the extent that —

MR. SWALWELL: Attorney-client privilege.

MR. KRANTZ: Yeah. Generally speaking, anything that occurred privately in connection with the Prevezon litigation where he worked as an interpreter would be privileged.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I met him while interpreting for the Prevezon case in New York, yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you see him again after October 2015?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes, I did.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And on what occasion?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: He came to New York several times again on the conjunction of the work on the case. I saw him in Brussels when I accompanied Ms. Veselnitskaya there.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you go to Brussels with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I believe it was April 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: What was the purpose of that trip?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: There is a Russian filmmaker who made a movie about the Magnitsky case, and there was supposed to be a screening of that movie in the European parliament.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever performed translation work where anyone from the Trump Organization was present prior to June 9?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever met anyone from the Trump Organization prior to June 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever met anyone from the Trump family prior to June 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Prior to June 2016, had you ever met Paul Manafort?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever communicated with him in any way?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Prior to June 2016, had you ever met Rob Goldstone?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever communicated with him in any way?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Ike Kaveladze. Have you ever met that individual?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I met him on the day of the meeting in June 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: So going back to Ms. Veselnitskaya, is it accurate to say that you first started working with her with respect to the Prevezon case?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. After the Prevezon case, or contemporaneous with that case, did you perform any other interpretive services for her with other clients?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes. In the end of 2016, she was involved in another case representing Russian defendants.

MR. SWALWELL: Was that in New York?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And end of 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct.

MR. SWALWELL: Who were --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: And beginning of 2017.

MR. SWALWELL: Who were those defendants?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: There was a civil litigation against Sberbank and Sberbank Capital, I believe.

MR. SWALWELL: Is that S-b-e-r-b-a-n-k?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes. I believe Ms. Veselnitskaya, to the best of my recollection, represents Sberbank Capital rather than the parent company.

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MR. SWALWELL: What was your understanding as to Ms. Veselnitskaya's relationship with the Russian Government?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Can you ask the question differently?

MR. SWALWELL: Yeah. Did you know whether she had any relationship at all with the Russian Government or not?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I knew and she told me that herself that she used to work at the Moscow regional prosecutors office and she began her legal career there. But I am not aware of any other connection.

MR. SWALWELL: When did she tell you that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't recall. At some point. I've been working with her for -- on and off for a year and a half.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she travel to Russia, to your knowledge, any time between -- other than the time you went with her -- any time between when you met her in 2015 to today?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes, that's what she told me, yes. She would spend several days or several weeks in New York and then would fly back.

MR. SWALWELL: Where would she stay when she was in New York, if you know?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: She had several hotels. She stayed at the Ritz-Carlton on Central Park South.

MR. SWALWELL: That's a nice one.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: She stayed at the -- and I'm -- do not recall the name, but it's a new boutique hotel across from the Brooklyn Library on East 41st Street. It's called Amza (ph) something. It starts with "A." Anyway, that one and --

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MR. KRANTZ: Brooklyn?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. No. No. New York Public Library. New York Public Library, yes, in East 41st in Midtown. And the last few times that she arrived she stayed at the Hyatt Park Central, which is on West 57th Street.

MR. SWALWELL: To your knowledge, who was paying for her expenses?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I have no idea.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know anything about --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: At one point, I believe she paid -- I recall that she paid at least once in my presence with a credit card for her hotel bill.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know if she has any relationship with Yuriy Chaika?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I do not know about her relationship. She once remarked that Mr. Katsyv's father knows Mr. Chaika. But I do not know the extent of Ms. Veselnitskaya's relationship, or lack thereof.

MR. SWALWELL: And Mr. Katsyv is the individual associated with HRAGIF?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I believe she was talking about his father.

MR. SWALWELL: I'm sorry. You're telling us that Natalia had told you that Mr. Katsyv's father knew Mr. Chaika?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: You know, to be perfectly exact, I don't remember how I learned that, but it was my understanding that older Mr. Katsyv knows Mr. Chaika. But I am not sure if I was explicitly told this by Ms. Veselnitskaya or by somebody else.

MR. SWALWELL: Who is Mr. Chaika?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Mr. Chaika, I believe, is the prosecutor general of

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the Russian Federation.

MR. SWALWELL: And did Ms. Veselnitskaya ever discuss or mention or say the name Chaika in your presence?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know whether Ms. Veselnitskaya has ever worked for or represented the Russian Government, other than her work in the regional prosecutors office?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I do not know anything about that, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with the FSB?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: I mean, but you know who the FSB is?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: They're successors of KGB, but -- yes, I know who -- what their organization is.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she ever discuss the FSB in your presence?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Are you familiar with the SVR? Have you heard of SVR?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I heard the acronym, but I presume it's some sort of intelligence operation.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she ever discuss the SVR in your presence, Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: And have you heard of the GRU?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And did Ms. Veselnitskaya ever discuss the GRU in

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your presence?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you communicate with Ms. Veselnitskaya from 2015 up to the June 2016 meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: A variety of ways. Sometimes I would get a call from Baker Hostettler asking me if I'm available on certain dates. She wrote emails to me, she called me, and we also communicated through WhatsApp.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. What messaging applications were you using in 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I personally started using WhatsApp at Ms. Veselnitskaya's request.

MR. SWALWELL: She asked you to download that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she say why?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Because WhatsApp has ■ feature where you could call internationally for free.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you communicate with any other Russian nationals through WhatsApp in 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about today? Are you in communication with any Russian nationals today through WhatsApp?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you remain in contact with Ms. Veselnitskaya today?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Not since middle of June 2017.

MR. SWALWELL: Are there any emails or WhatsApp messages between

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you and Ms. Veselnitskaya that relate to the June 9 meeting that you attended?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. There was never any written communication or any media relating to that meeting.

MR. SWALWELL: How did you come to know about that meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was told by Ms. Veselnitskaya about that meeting in the morning of 2000 -- June 9, 2016.

MR. SWALWELL: Where were you when you were told?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: In a car.

MR. SWALWELL: Where?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: On FDR going to the courthouse in the morning.

MR. SWALWELL: Why were you going to the courthouse?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: On that day, there was an appellate hearing in the Prevezon case, which was stayed. And I believe it was the date when the Fifth Circuit held appellate hearings in that matter.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know about what time she told you about the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't recall that exactly. At some point that morning.

MR. SWALWELL: And you were going to the courthouse for a case that Ms. Veselnitskaya was involved?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And she called you on your cell phone?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I met her at the hotel, and we got into the car together and went to the court hearing.

MR. SWALWELL: Which hotel was this?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: One of the three. Either the Andaz (ph) Hotel -- that's the name of the second one -- Andaz (ph) or Park Hyatt.

MR. SWALWELL: What did she tell you about the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That she has a meeting with Donald Trump Jr., and I believe she told me that, as I recall, because she asked me to write a message for her, to translate and to write a message for her.

MR. SWALWELL: A message prior to the meeting or a message for the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It was a message asking to add Mr. Akhmetshin to the list of attendees.

MR. SWALWELL: Was it an email that she was sending?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I recalled it as being a text message. Since then, I saw that it was an email, and I recognize that it is my wording. I was the one who translated and wrote that message.

MR. SWALWELL: So if I show you an exhibit -- and it should have a Bates stamp. This one doesn't. I'll get you the right one with the Bates stamp. But if you want to just take a look at it and tell me if that looks familiar. Is this something that you heard her say and something that you contemporaneously interpreted?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes, this is the message that I translated that morning.

MR. SWALWELL: This is the "Meeting Confirmed for Donald Trump Jr." email. Do you want to hold onto that. Mr. Quigley will have questions for you.

You wrote that correspondence for Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes. She dictated while we were in the car, and I

wrote that into her phone.

MR. SWALWELL: What's @Mail.RU?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I have no idea.

MR. SWALWELL: So you wrote the message to Mr. Goldstone into her phone?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I did not remember until I saw that message that it was to Mr. Goldstone, but I remembered writing the message adding Mr. Akhmetshin to the list of attendees.

MR. SWALWELL: So in the email, it says, "Dear, Mr. Goldstone, I'm writing to ask you to pass by Mt. (Ph) Trump, my request to include our trusted associate and lobbyist Mr. Rinat Akhmetshin, who is working to advance these issues with several congressmen. He has invaluable knowledge about the positions held by members of the Foreign Relations Committee that will be very important to our discussion. Mr. Akhmetshin has signed an NDA with us, as did Mr. Samochornov. I will be awaiting your decision. Kind regards, Natalia."

Now, it appears that she's referencing permission that was already granted to you to be in the meeting. Is that right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: To your knowledge, had she already received permission for you to be in the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I do not know anything about that.

MR. SWALWELL: It's unclear in the email which time zone this email is being sent, but it does say 9:24. Is that right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It fits with my recollection, because the court hearing was at 10:00, so that makes sense. It puts us in the car while in transit to

the courthouse from Midtown to downtown Manhattan.

MR. SWALWELL: And the first time she had asked you to be a part of this meeting was in the same context that she's asking you to send this message. Is that right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know why she would be referencing what appears to be permission already granted to you to be in the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't recall that. And, again, the message was dictated, and, you know, I put it in sort of -- and I see a made I typo, but in applicable English form.

MR. SWALWELL: Right. The NDA that she's referencing, did you sign an NDA with her?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you sign an NDA with her for -- specific to the June 9 meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I signed an NDA with her in October 2015.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And that -- the way you understand it is what she's referencing as far as the NDA that you signed? That's the only NDA you signed?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It's the only NDA that I signed, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And do you have a copy of that, of that NDA, or could we follow up and get a copy of that NDA?

MR. KRANTZ: We can make a search for it. I don't recall if we have it or not.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Sure. It's the first contract.

MR. SWALWELL: And is there anything about the NDA that you signed with Ms. Veselnitskaya in 2015 that you believe limits your testimony to us today or your testimony to any committees in the past?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think on the advice of my clients, I don't think that the NDA holds during congressional investigations, so I believe no.

MR. SWALWELL: You have good lawyers.

So Ms. Veselnitskaya tells you, prior to the courthouse, that you'll be going to meet with Donald Trump Jr. What was your reaction to being told you'll be in a meeting with such a high-profile individual on pretty short notice?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was surprised. It was not her typical caliber of meetings.

MR. SWALWELL: Had she ever, in your presence, mentioned Donald Trump Jr. or anybody in the Trump family before?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Was this the first time you'd ever heard her talk about the Trump family?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I believe so, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she ever comment to you from October 2015 up until this moment in the car on the U.S. presidential election? Did she have any opinions about it?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't remember any specific opinions on presidential elections until after Mr. Trump has won the election.

MR. SWALWELL: If you had to characterize -- you know, if you asked me about my friends and my parents, you know, if they were in favor of Mr. Trump or Ms. Clinton, I could probably tell you, with some degree of accuracy, as to who

they were for. Could you tell us who Ms. Veselnitskaya was rooting for at that time?

MR. KRANTZ: Based on things she said?

MR. SWALWELL: Based on things she said or actions she took.

MR. KRANTZ: As opposed to speculative?

MR. SWALWELL: Yeah.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Based on things she said, no. Ms. Veselnitskaya would appear to be a social conservative as a person, but also very pragmatic. So I don't think she was -- I would not characterize her as partisan towards U.S. politics in one particular way or another.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ask her what the purpose of the meeting was to be when she told you that you would be meeting with Donald Trump Jr.?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ask her for any materials to prepare for the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, I did not.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she have any materials that seemed to be relevant to the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she tell you who else would be attending the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Well, I would presume it would be me, Ms. Veselnitskaya, and Mr. Akhmetshin. At that time, at the moment of the car, I only heard those three names -- thought that there would be three people attending.

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MR. SWALWELL: Now, Mr. Goldstone wrote back, about 30 minutes later, saying, "I would suggest you bring whoever you need in order to make the meeting successful." Did you read that correspondence back?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I must have, but I don't have a recollection of that specific message.

MR. SWALWELL: And when you say "you must have," is that because Ms. Veselnitskaya would not have been able to understand a response in English without your assistance or an interpreter's assistance?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: She has some very basic level of understanding, so sometimes she grasps the general direction. Sitting here today, I don't remember reading that email back to her, but when I say I must have, I was with her, so it is very likely that I had.

MR. SWALWELL: And he references making the meeting successful. At this point, do you have any sense, knowing that you're going to be an interpreter in the meeting, what a successful meeting would be?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you learn of what the topic of the meeting would be?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I never was specifically told what the topic of the meeting would be.

MR. SWALWELL: Was that something that you would typically know in advance of a meeting, at least so you could prepare to have as accurate as possible contemporaneous interpretive services?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Up until the work with Sberbank case, almost -- not almost -- everything I interpreted for Ms. Veselnitskaya was related to

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Prevezon case and the predicate crime.

MR. SWALWELL: For your own curiosity, did you ever ask her, you know, Hey, Natalia, what's this meeting about, or Why are we going to meet with Donald Trump Jr.?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't recall doing so.

MR. SWALWELL: How were you to be paid for your services?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I was, at that time, on the retainer from HRAGIF, so they were paying me a monthly retainer.

MR. SWALWELL: From HRAGIF?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: It was your understanding that HRAGIF was going to pick up the bill for your work in this meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you meet with anyone after the court case and prior to the Trump Tower meeting that day?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Where?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: There was a meeting after the court case between Natalia and Baker Hostettler lawyers and Mr. Mulcasey (ph) who argued for Baker Hostettler. And I also believe there was a meeting at Baker Hostettler, and then there was a luncheon.

MR. SWALWELL: Where was the lunch?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It was at the restaurant called Nello on Madison Avenue, New York.

MR. SWALWELL: Could you spell that?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: N-e-l-l-o.

MR. SWALWELL: Who was at that lunch?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I believe that Ms. Veselnitskaya and I arrived first. We were later joined by Mr. Akhmetshin and then by Mr. Kaveladze.

MR. SWALWELL: I'm going to pass it over to Mr. Quigley, and I'll probably come back with more questions.

MR. QUIGLEY: Thanks for being here, sir. I'm Mike Quigley.

So who ended up paying you? Was it the same entity for that interpretation?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct.

MR. QUIGLEY: So you started to distinguish between translation and interpreting. Could you explain that, elaborate a little bit more what that means?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: In my understanding, in my profession, interpreting is something that people do orally; translation is something that people do in writing.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. And you are primarily an interpreter?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct.

MR. QUIGLEY: When you're interpreting, it's not just translating the words. It's sometimes translating what's difficult for the other person who's trying to understand this to understand the emphasis, the slang, the -- what the words might mean in different context rather than just a bland writing. Is that -- can you elaborate on how you interpret emotions or things that are hard to describe that are just translated?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I'm not sure I understand your question, but I will try to answer.

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MR. QUIGLEY: Sure.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: St. Jerome, who translated the bible, somewhere said that it's important to translate the thought.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. That's a better way of describing it than I did. Do you try to translate the thought?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It depends on the situation. At the high-level official meetings, I translate as close to what is said in the language, even if it does not make sense. When you translate to the President, you do not guess his thoughts. You translate word by word.

In a more relaxed situation, you do try to convey -- especially if there is something idiomatic, you have to find an equivalent in English. So it's not exactly precise science or --

MR. QUIGLEY: Perhaps you can understand why I ask, because if you were just to -- the reason I ask for the distinction, if you were just to give us the translation, the text of that meeting and how you interpreted it, sometimes you can't read and understand the emphasis and what the person was trying to convey as an interpreter, right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct. I can't get inside the other person's head and understand their full meaning.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. Well, try to help us understand, to the extent you possibly can, as your skills. So when you were interpreting at the June 9 meeting, were you doing it just for Natalia?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: So in other words, when someone spoke in English, you were speaking to her at the exact same time and translating into Russian?

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes. But I would presume we get into the details of the meeting, but Ms. Veselnitskaya spoke at the meeting and was spoken to at the meeting for maybe five times -- 5 minutes, excuse me. So I interpreted that bit. But then somebody else spoke, and she asked me not to interpret that.

MR. QUIGLEY: So when other people spoke, she asked you not to tell her what they were -- interpret to her what they were --

MR. KRANTZ: This particular person.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Perhaps it would be easy if I describe what was my role at the meeting.

MR. QUIGLEY: Yeah. Go ahead. Let's start with that.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: So there was a round of introductions. People sat down, and Ms. Veselnitskaya made her first remarks.

MR. QUIGLEY: She opened?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes, as I recall. And I interpreted the introductions and her remarks and the remark made to her. After that, it was Mr. Akhmetshin who took the floor, and he spoke for maybe another 10, 15 minutes. And that she asked me not to interpret.

MR. QUIGLEY: I'm sorry. Could you repeat that last part again?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: So after Ms. Veselnitskaya was finished there was a remark made to her, which I interpreted, and then Mr. Akhmetshin took the floor, and she asked me not to interpret what he was saying.

MR. QUIGLEY: Did she explain why she didn't want that interpreted?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. But if I may venture out to say, it was a familiar topic, since sometimes she did that she knew and could follow what was being said on the topic that she was familiar with.

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MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. How long did this meeting last?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That I can tell you exactly --

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: -- because I happened to glance at my watch, which I keep a couple minutes fast. We were downstairs at the bar at the Trump Tower at 25 past the hour.

MR. QUIGLEY: What was the hour?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think it was 4:00. And we were made to arrive promptly. That was something that Mr. Kaveladze stressed.

MR. QUIGLEY: All right. So the meeting started at exactly 4:00?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Started promptly, exactly 4:00, a couple minutes after, and by 25 minutes or so past, we were already downstairs at the bar.

MR. SWALWELL: So you think the meeting lasted about 20 minutes?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And the meeting started with a round of general introductions?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. Well, let's go back even further. Who was at the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I remember some people but not others. I remember Mr. Manafort, Mr. Donald Trump Jr., Mr. Akhmetshin, Ms. Veselnitskaya, and myself.

MR. QUIGLEY: Could you just slow down just for all of our sakes. You said Mr. Manafort, Mr. Trump Jr. Who was the third one?

██████████ 5 minutes.

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Mr. Akhmetshin, Ms. Veselnitskaya, myself, and Mr. Kushner. I remember other people present at the room visually, but I don't have a recollection of who they were.

MR. QUIGLEY: Rob Goldstone?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I just do not remember him visually in the room.

MR. QUIGLEY: So you're recognizing five people, and then you would be the sixth. And how many other people were there that you don't remember?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Two or three.

MR. QUIGLEY: So Rob Goldstone doesn't ring a bell with you?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Can I just explain. I remember visually where I sat and remember the room.

MR. QUIGLEY: Why don't we do that.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I remember where other people sat, but I don't remember --

MR. QUIGLEY: We're going to give you a little rectangular table if you want to --

MR. SWALWELL: You could make the initials for -- and just put the initials for each person.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: So this is 5th Avenue. It was a corner room.

MR. QUIGLEY: If you want to put a question mark where there was somebody you don't know who they were, and that will suffice.

MR. SWALWELL: Can you just write at the bottom or sign at the bottom your name and we'll put that as exhibit 2. And we'll make a copy for counsel.

MR. KRANTZ: Thank you.

If I could just chime in, just because I've heard this many times, in terms of

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Mr. Goldstone you were asking about, he did escort the party upstairs to the conference room. They jumped over that.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. But he escorted you up and -- the person who escorted you up was Mr. Goldstone?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Who I later understand to be Mr. Goldstone. We were met -- we walked over to Trump Tower into the main entrance from 5th Avenue. There was an elevator on the left side, and that's where we were met by a gentleman whom I later understood to be Mr. Goldstone.

MR. QUIGLEY: All right. So that person that you later understood to be Mr. Goldstone escorted you, but did he stay for the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That I just don't remember. Sorry.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. How about Ike Kaveladze?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: He also walked with us, and he was with us on the elevator. I just visually don't remember him at the meeting. I'm sorry.

MR. QUIGLEY: I think we're probably going to have to break there. I don't know if you want to --

[REDACTED] Sure, sir.

EXAMINATION

BY [REDACTED]

Q Thanks, very much. Again, my name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I'm a staffer with the majority here.

We'll get to the meeting, the June 9 meeting in a second. I just wanted to ask you some further questions about Ms. Veselnitskaya. You said she had -- Ms. Veselnitskaya had a basic understanding of English. Can you tell me a little more what that means.

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A I really -- I can't testify to her language proficiency. She would be able to order a cup of coffee or ask for her meat to come without onions, but she would never speak in a professional setting, or I never heard her speaking a full English sentence. So I do not -- to me, it appeared that she had very basic words of everyday usage but not much more.

Q Given your background in languages and in translations and interpretations, do you think Ms. Veselnitskaya could have held a conversation with an English-speaking party without services of an interpreter or translator?

A I've never seen her do that, and I don't think so.

Q Okay. And you've known her for about how long now?

A For about -- since October 2015 until about May 2017, but it was not continuous. Like I explained, she came for a few days or a few weeks, and then there were big breaks in between.

Q And your relationship with Ms. Veselnitskaya was professional, just working relationship?

A Yes.

Q And you didn't become friends or anything like that?

A We became friendly. She always picked up a tab for the entire team in the restaurants, you know, she inquired about my family, but we did not become intimate friends.

Q But not something like where you guys kept up relationships with each other too much outside of your business capacity?

A No.

Q Now, you said the -- well, let me just ask it. When was the last time you saw or spoke to or heard from Ms. Veselnitskaya?

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A I -- middle of June 2017.

Q And when was that in reference to?

A They settled their case that they had in the Southern District in May 2017, and I was collecting an outstanding bill.

Q And when you say "they," you mean --

A Ms. Akhmetshin and Ms. Veselnitskaya.

Q Okay. So the parties that you were assisting --

A Correct.

Q -- had settled their case?

A Yes.

Q So she contacted you just to sort of settle the bill and --

A Rather I sent her an email to settle the bill.

Q After that time, had you ever heard from her or about her or anything like that?

A Well, I hear a lot about her but I have not heard from her directly.

Q No communications from her?

A No.

Q Has any third party tried to contact you or hold communications between you and Ms. Veselnitskaya since that time?

A I had a few calls from Mr. Denis Katsyv's phone, but I haven't returned them.

Q What were those calls?

A I have no idea. I just had record that he called.

Q Oh. But no voicemail or anything like that?

A No.

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Q No text messaging or anything like that?

A No.

Q So no other parties had reached out to you since the June of approximately 2016 in relation to Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A No.

Q Okay. During your employment with or working relationship with Ms. Veselnitskaya, did you -- you mentioned that sometimes she would pick up the tab at certain situations. Is that before and after work engagements ended or began?

A Could you define the question?

Q Sure. You said that Ms. Veselnitskaya would sometimes pick up the tab. I'm trying to figure out, is that during work or after work had settled, or before where you guys all met up?

A I've never met her outside of the working situation, so it was always during the workdays. And I was not the only interpreter, and sometimes she would host lunches, so she would always be the one who pays -- paid.

Q And you said there was -- you were not always the only interpreter, meaning that when you worked with Ms. Veselnitskaya, would she utilize you and another interpreter or --

A Yes.

Q And how would that work?

A We would work in half-hour shifts.

Q Okay. And generally, was it a certain individual that would accompany you and her, or was it a rotating body?

A She brought with her another individual, and it was just this one

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person.

Q Okay. Do you know who that is?

A Yes. His name is Morat Glashev.

Q Okay. And when did you first meet that person with

Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A In June 2016.

Q Okay. Did he participate at all, in any way, in the meeting at the Trump Tower on June 9?

A No.

Q Was he -- and you'll have to give me his name again. I'm sorry.

A Mr. Glashev.

Q Could you spell that, please.

A G-l-a-s-h-e-v.

Q Okay. Mr. Glashev, was he present for any meetings you had with Ms. Veselnitskaya before or after the June 9 meeting?

A I first met Mr. Glashev the week after June 9 meeting. And the circumstances were that I had to go back to New York for prior interpreting engagement, and he flew in to step in for me. So it was definitely after the meeting, and then she brought him over in the end of 2016 and beginning of 2017, to basically be a second interpreter.

Q Okay. So is it fair to say that Mr. -- sorry --

A Glashev.

Q -- Glashev had, as far as your understanding, had no involvement with the June 9 meeting or any preparation for the June 9 meeting at Trump Tower?

A As far as I know, no, he didn't.

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Q Okay. On the day of the meeting, on June 9, where did you first meet Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A I believe at her hotel.

Q And where was that approximately?

A It was either the Andaz (ph) Hotel or the Park Hyatt hotel, either one of these two.

Q Was there anyone else there?

A Not that I recall.

Q Okay. Is it at that time you first learned about the Donald Trump meeting?

A No. What I recall is that we got into a car, and she was working on her phones and she received a phone call, and then she asked me to translate that message for her.

Q Okay.

A And that is what I recall when I heard about the meeting first.

Q That's the first time you heard about the meeting?

A Yes.

Q So you meet Ms. Veselnitskaya at the hotel for other work that you had arranged to be done?

A Yes.

Q And that's in relation to the Prevezon case?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And shortly thereafter, in the morning, you get in a car or taxi, and the message is received on Ms. Veselnitskaya's phone that she asked you to translate?

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MR. KRANTZ: The call.

BY [REDACTED]

Q I'm sorry. The call.

A I believe it was a call that she received and then she asked me to write the message.

Q Okay. Do you know who you spoke to?

A I do not know.

Q Did you ever learn who it was that made that call?

A No.

Q Okay. And from the taxi, where did you go with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A To the courthouse.

Q Okay. How long did you stay at the courthouse?

A Approximately until noon.

Q A couple hours? Was it a few hours?

A Yes.

Q Did you meet anyone at the courthouse while you were with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A There were people from Baker Hostettler. There were several people, and because appellate courts are heard in tandem with other cases are heard, not separately, but in tandem of other cases, so, yeah, there was a room with maybe 50 people in it.

Q Were you in the courtroom itself --

A Yeah.

Q -- basically the entire time waiting for the case that you were involved with to be heard?

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A We stepped out and she spoke with Mr. Simerot (ph), as I recall.

Q Did she speak with anyone else in your presence?

A I don't remember.

Q Okay. And once the court case -- your court case concluded, what happened next?

A We left the hearing room, and we went downstairs and she had a conversation with her lawyers.

Q With her lawyers. Do you recall who?

A It was definitely Mr. Simerot (ph). There were a couple of other people from Baker Hostettler and Mr. Mulcasey (ph).

Q Now, during this time -- or I should say, from the time that you got into the taxi and learned of the meeting that was to take place later at Trump Tower until your court case finished, did you acquire anymore information about the meeting from anyone?

A No.

Q Did Ms. Veselnitskaya in this same time period tell you any further information about the meeting or that you would be getting further information about the meeting when you got there?

A No.

Q So what happened next? So after Ms. Veselnitskaya meets with her attorneys after the court case is over, what happens next?

A They decide to reconvene at their offices at Baker Hostettler.

Q Did you go with them?

A You know, let me explain. I did not remember that part of the day until very recently. I found the slip of a pass from Baker Hostettler dated June 9,

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2016, at about 1:30. I don't remember that meeting because there was a lot of them in their offices, but based on that slip, I must have acquired it to go up there. But I do not have a firm recollection of the Baker Hostettler --

Q To the best of your recollection, you went from the courthouse and, pursuant to this pass that you found, to the offices of Baker Hostettler?

A It's not so much the recollection, rather the reconstruction of the room space (ph) and the found document. But, yes, we must have went to Baker Hostettler, and it was a practice in other such cases that after the hearing they would go and talk in the office.

Q And do you recall -- well, what do you recall happened next? What's your first memory after this Baker Hostettler meeting?

A We went to Nello's for lunch, and at that time, I think I already knew that Mr. Akhmetshin -- well, I wrote the message that he would be joining us so I knew that he would be joining us, and he came over.

Q For lunch?

A For lunch. And I remember that lunch was rather leisurely. So it must be definitely over an hour, maybe an hour and a half, and then Mr. Kaveladze joined us.

Q So in total, who all was at the lunch?

A In total there were four people, myself, Ms. Veselnitskaya, Mr. Kaveladze, and Mr. Akhmetshin.

Q And the conversations during that lunch, were they all in English? Were they all in Russian? Was it a mix?

A No, the conversation was all in Russian, which is why I remember only part of it, because I spoke for a little bit, for a little while, and then I excused myself

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and worked with my messages and with my phone. But I remember the general conversation was about the Magnitsky law, Mr. Browder, the Prevezon case.

Q Okay. Did any topics come up regarding the 2016 presidential election cycle? Politics? Republicans? Democrats? Anything like that?

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[3:10 p.m.]

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. The only thing that I clearly recall is that Mr. Kaveladze insisted that we not be late. But I don't remember anything about elections or anything about politics besides what I have described.

BY [REDACTED]

Q And during that lunch, did you find or learn of any newer information as to what this meeting at Trump Tower was going to be about?

A I don't think I was ever specifically told what that meeting was going to be about.

Q So your testimony, to the best of your recollection, is that until you walked into the meeting at Trump Tower on June 9, you had no information as to the subject matter or what would be discussed?

A No.

Q Did all four of you leave the restaurant together to head over to Trump Tower?

A That's what I recall, yes.

Q And a taxi or walk or --

A I believe that we walked. The restaurant is on 61st Street and Trump Tower is on 57th. It's a five-block walk.

Q During that five-block walk, did you discuss with the -- well, why don't you tell me, who were you talking to on that five-block walk, if anyone?

A I don't remember, sir.

Q No problem. Do you remember during that five-block walk receiving any further information as to what might happen upstairs at Trump Tower at the meeting?

A No.

Q Did Ms. Veselnitskaya provide you with any additional information in that walk to Trump Tower from lunch about what the meeting would be or who would be there?

A No.

Q Did you have any advanced knowledge of who else, besides the four of you, would be at the meeting?

A I knew that the meeting would be with Donald Trump Jr. Yes.

Q Outside of Donald Trump Jr., did you know anyone else before you got there that would be at that meeting?

A I do not recall that I had been told anything else.

Q When you entered Trump Tower, tell me what happened when you first walked into the building?

A So we entered from Fifth Avenue, and there is a white passage going to the waterfall and the winter garden. So on the left side -- and there was security set up -- on the left side there was an elevator and we were met by a gentleman, who I later learned was Mr. Goldstone, and he took us upstairs.

Q So it sounds like, and tell me if I'm wrong, but pretty much as soon as you got into the building, Trump Tower, you were met by Mr. Goldstone and taken upstairs?

A That's what I recall, yes.

Q Okay. No sort of lounging around or free time downstairs --

A No.

Q -- chatting with any individuals?

A No.

Q Once you were taken upstairs into the building, what happens next?

A We also were very promptly ushered into a conference room. There was a lobby. And the conference room was separated by ■ glass wall from the lobby. And we were asked in. And that's when Mr. Donald Trump Jr., Mr. Manafort introduced himself to the party. There was ■ round of introductions and business card exchanges.

Q When you first entered this conference room, were other folks already inside of it or you went in — your group went in first and then the others followed?

A I don't remember that detail.

Q No problem.

And can you approximate for us, I know you've drawn it here, but approximately how many people were in this conference room?

A My recollection, the room was kind of almost like this, but without one side. I do not know how to describe the shape, kind of along the perimeter.

Q Uh-huh.

A And my recollection that there were eight to nine people in the room.

Q Was it your understanding from your conversations with Ms. Veselnitskaya that your role in that meeting was to provide her with interpretations as she requested?

A Yes.

Q So what interpretations did you provide Ms. Veselnitskaya during the June 9 Trump Tower meeting?

A So as I have described, we walked in, and I was there when the pleasantries were exchanged and cards were exchanged. And then we were sat down. And I interpreted the words of Ms. Veselnitskaya and she spoke for maybe

3 or 4 minutes.

Q What did she speak about?

A She talked about -- again, this is my recollection -- she spoke that during the course of her research into Prevezon case she uncovered financial irregularities by Mr. Browder and also by his clients, the Ziff Brothers. And that also she alleged that Ziff Brothers were contributors -- and here, again, I don't remember -- either to the DNC or to Mrs. Clinton's campaign.

Q So say that last part again. I am sorry.

A I don't have the exact recollection of to whom she alleged the money went, but it was either the DNC or Hillary Clinton's campaign.

Q That's the irregularities, the financial irregularities that Ms. Veselnitskaya discovered from her dealings with the Prevezon matter.

A Yes.

MR. KRANTZ: Let me make sure.

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes, yes. So that Ziff Brothers have both invested improperly into Russia, have evaded taxes. So there were financial irregularities with them as investors and that they have also been donors to Democratic causes.

BY [REDACTED]

Q And this is what Ms. Veselnitskaya was saying --

A Yes.

Q -- during her 3 or 4 minutes of speaking?

A Correct.

Q Did she say anything else?

A No, not to my recollection.

Q Were you asked to translate from English back to Russian anything that was being said during the meeting to Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A Yes. I wasn't asked, I was just there --

Q Doing it.

A -- doing my job. So nobody specifically asked me. But Mr. Manafort reacted to what Ms. Veselnitskaya said. And he said something along the lines that the fact that there is a political contribution is not significant, that people contribute to both parties all the time. Something along those lines.

Q What else do you remember being said?

A That's about it. And then Mr. Manafort kind of looked at his telephone or whatever device he had.

Q Who would you say was sort of leading, if anyone, the meeting? Was it being sort of quote, unquote, chaired by any one or was it just sort of an informal discussion by all folks that were there?

A I never thought about it in those terms, but I think I would say that Mr. Donald Trump Jr. was the host.

Q Did Mr. Donald Trump Jr. say anything that you -- that you can remember along the lines of does anyone have any information that is -- would show then candidate Secretary Clinton in a negative light that he could be provided at that meeting?

A No, I don't remember anything like that. I remember only one remark of Mr. Donald Trump Jr. and that's what he said in the conclusion after Ms. Veselnitskaya spoke. He said something -- and here again, I don't remember whether he said if or when -- but the phrase was something that when my father is

President, we'll revisit that issue then. And that was his parting words when he said goodbye.

Q When you say he, you mean Donald Trump Jr.

A Donald Trump Jr.

Q And then he left the room?

A And then we left the room.

Q What did you understand to be the subject matter of Donald Trump Jr. parting words? What was he referencing?

A He just heard a presentation about the possibility of lifting the adoption ban. So I do know what he meant, but I assume he was reacting to what he heard for the past 15 minutes.

Q Sure. And the focus of the meeting then would have been regarding Russian adoptions and the adoption ban. And Mr. Donald Trump Jr. at the end of the meeting, as you best recollect, said, well, if or when his father is President, you can revisit the issue. Is that correct?

A That is correct, yes.

MR. KRANTZ: That was the subject of Rinat's portion of the meeting.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Uh-huh, yeah.

MR. KRANTZ: You sort of jumped over that.

██████████ Sure. No, we got it.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Just to make sure, out of the approximately 20 minutes, I would say that two-thirds of the meeting was Mr. Akhmetshin speaking and very short preamble by Ms. Veselnitskaya.

BY ██████████

Q What was the sum and substance of what Mr. Akhmetshin was

saying?

A I don't remember that exactly. To be frank, I sort of tuned out. But it was vaguely and generally about the work of the foundation and the attempts to get the Congressional Review Board to review the circumstances of Mr. Magnitsky's arrest and death, and hopefully to get that issue resolved to the benefit of both countries.

Q Do you recall if Mr. Akhmetshin made any comments along the lines of he or someone he knew being able to provide information to the Trump campaign regarding then candidate Hillary Clinton?

A No.

Q Do you recall if anyone else in the meeting, six or eight people, however many there were there, at any portion during the meeting stated that they would be willing or could provide information that would cast then candidate Clinton in a negative light to the Donald Trump campaign?

A No. And against the advice of my lawyer, if I heard, especially after the publicity and something would come to mind, I would go to the relevant authorities. But I've never heard anything about the elections being mentioned at that meeting at all or in any subsequent discussions with Ms. Veselnitskaya.

Q So to the best of your recollection, during the June 9th meeting with Donald Trump Jr. and about six or seven others, there was no mention of anything regarding elections, with the U.S. Presidential race, or any campaigns?

A No, sir.

MR. KRANTZ: Other than the opening remarks.

Right.

BY

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

Q How did the meeting end? Did you guys, just everybody up and left or --

A Mr. Donald Trump Jr. kind of drew it to a close. And after a certain time he kind of said that the time is up, thanked everybody for coming, said the words that I quoted roughly, and we were shown the door to the elevator.

Q And then went downstairs?

A [Nonverbal response.]

Q Did you all hang out in the lobby for any bit of time or just leave?

A We went to a bar to have a drink.

Q And who was with you?

A At that time I recall Mr. Akhmetshin, Mr. Kaveladze, Ms. Veselnitskaya, and myself.

Q Okay. Do you remember what you guys talked about?

A Yes.

Q What?

A My recollection is that Ms. Veselnitskaya was kind of unhappy with the meeting. She said, "Was that it?" or something to that effect. And Mr. Akhmetshin and Mr. Kaveladze I believe both, and perhaps Mr. Goldstein in the elevator -- or Goldstone rather, excuse me -- in the elevator, they tried to tell her that it was still a productive meeting because she was able to put her issue forward.

Q Anything else happen during your -- the four of you sort of drink at the bar downstairs?

A Not particularly. Mr. Kaveladze left first, very soon, and Mr. Akhmetshin and Ms. Veselnitskaya stayed for some other -- so maybe we spent

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an hour.

Q Okay. Just circling back with the timing of the meeting upstairs, you said you were pretty certain of the time, you had looked at your watch. So do you recall what time exactly you got into the conference room upstairs for the meeting to actually begin?

A I did not look at my watch then. I just remember timing-wise we were striving to be punctual and on time. So we had arrived some time around 4 o'clock into the lobby of Trump Tower.

Q And you were back downstairs at the lobby bar at what time?

A 25 past 4.

Q Okay. So the meeting could not have lasted even 25 minutes between going upstairs, coming back downstairs, and exchanging pleasantries and business cards, in your estimation?

A No, sir. I even remember thinking that it was rather quick.

Q Much quicker than that.

A I remember looking at the watch and being surprised that it's only -- that it's already -- you know, it's only 25. And I remember the meeting was rather quick. I registered that thought and that's why I remember the time.

Q Jumping back down to downstairs after Mr. Kaveladze left the four of you, what did you and Ms. Veselnitskaya and the other individual talk about for the remaining time that you were together?

A You mean at the bar?

Q At the bar.

A I don't immediately recall. I remember that her general reaction was kind of dissatisfaction and that Mr. Akhmetshin saying that this is still ■ good

presentation, and a good beginning, and you made your issue known. But beyond that, I don't really remember any specific topics.

Q And then where did you go after that or was that the end of the business?

A I think we all went home, but I actually haven't checked the dates. But there was a Russian theater in town, and I think that after I went home I came back and we all -- the three of us went to the theater.

Q Which three?

A City Center is at 55th between 6th and 7th.

Q No, I'm sorry. Which three?

A I thought you said which theater. I'm sorry. Which three? It was Mr. Akhmetshin, Ms. Veselnitskaya, and myself.

Q And no one else joined you?

A No.

Q Did you go out for dinner before or after?

A I don't think so.

Q Okay. And after the theater production ended, everyone just went home?

A Yeah.

Q Since that time -- sorry, go ahead.

A No, I just said yes, I don't recall any after dinner drinks or anything like that.

Q Since that time on June 9th have you talked to Ms. Veselnitskaya or anyone else about the substance of the Donald Trump Jr. meeting other than what you have testified to today?

A Well, after July 8th, yes, I talked to several investigating parties. But we had a conversation with Ms. Veselnitskaya about this meeting in the early spring of 2017.

Q What happened during that conversation?

A I told her that -- and during that time it was the preparation to the Prevezon court hearings and the case was progressing. And I told her that with all the publicity that is happening about the Russian intervention in the elections, if that meeting will come out, it would be affecting publicity negatively for her for the case.

And she remarked: But why? Nothing happened.

And I said: I think it's not what happened, it's who was there. And I said that there was Mr. Kushner and Mr. Manafort.

And from her response, it was clear to me that she did not remember Mr. Kushner being present there. And I told her that's the one who got up and left.

Q When you say -- just unpack that a little bit. So at the June 9th meeting, before that meeting ended, Mr. Kushner left the room?

A Mr. Kushner, as I recall, left maybe after 5 or 6 -- I mean, I don't remember exactly, but shortly after Mr. Akhmetshin began talking.

Q So in your estimation, Mr. Kushner was not even present for half of the time?

A More than half, for two-thirds of the meeting, yeah.

Q He was missing for more than two-thirds?

A Correct. He got up next. And I don't know if it matters, but the reason I remember is visual, because I sat across him, across the table in the room, and I remember him getting up. And I recognized him from the press

coverage. And he walked through that other door holding the phone.

Q Since that time, has anyone from then the Trump campaign or now the Trump administration contacted you about this matter?

A No, sir.

Q Other than the numerous investigations on the Hill and law enforcement authorities, have you discussed this matter with any other individuals?

A Beyond my immediate family members, no.

Q Do you know anyone by the name of Glenn Simpson?

A I know who that is, yes.

Q Have you ever met him or communicated with him?

A I met him. I met him first in the fall of 2015.

Q Where did you meet him?

A At the offices of Baker Hostetler.

Q Okay. Again, was that -- what was that in relation to?

A That was in relation to his work on the Prevezon case.

Q Did you and Mr. Simpson work together on the matter or was he working on some separate portion of the matter?

A My best understanding that he was doing research for the case, but I don't work together with him.

Q Okay. Did you keep up with Mr. Simpson after meeting him at that time or did you have further communications with Mr. Simpson?

A I did not keep up any separate channel of communications with Mr. Simpson, but I met him several times in conjunction -- in the context of my interpreting duties for Ms. Veselnitskaya in the Prevezon case.

Q So would you say it's fair that your only interactions with Mr. Glenn Simpson were in relation to the Prevezon matter and with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A Absolutely.

Q Did you ever meet with Mr. Simpson and Ms. Veselnitskaya on or about the time of the Donald Trump Jr. meeting on June 9th?

A I recall that there was a dinner organized by Mr. Simbrot (ph) the weekend of that week in Washington. And I remember that Mr. Simpson was present there.

And then, after that, the following week there was one or two business meetings that he also attended in conjunction with Prevezon case at Baker Hostetler's offices here in Washington.

Q Okay. So were both of those dinners and meetings after the June 9 meeting?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you have any conversations Mr. Simpson at either of those meetings?

A Personal? No.

Q Anything substantive other than exchanging pleasantries --

A No.

Q -- hi, hello?

A No.

Q Did Ms. Veselnitskaya ask you to translate for her anything to Mr. Simpson or Mr. Simpson in return to her?

A Yes.

Q Do you remember what that was?

A That was all within the Prevezon case and within that matter. So there was, as I recall, one or maybe two meetings next week. So if the meeting was on June 9th, I was in New York on 14th and 15th. So some time between the 15th of June and the 20th of June there occurred two meetings, business meetings, where Mr. Simpson was present at Baker Hostetler's offices related to Prevezon. And the dinner must have occurred on the 12th or 13th of June, roughly.

Q To the best of your recollection, you were not present for any meetings between Ms. Veselnitskaya and Mr. Simpson on the day of the Trump Tower meeting, other than what you've already described?

A No. I don't recall Mr. Simpson during that day at all.

Q How about the day before with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A No. I don't recall, no.

Q And on June 10th, the immediate day after?

A No.

Q Have you ever done any work with Mr. Simpson's company, Fusion GPS?

A No.

Q Has anyone ever reached out to you on behalf of Fusion GPS to provide any services for them as a third party?

A No, sir. I mean, to be perfectly exhaustively correct, I sometimes get third-party translations that I do not know who the ultimate client is. But to the best of my knowledge, I've never done any -- I only learned the name Fusion GPS only in conjunction with meeting Mr. Simpson through Prevezon case.

Q Thank you. I appreciate that.

Do you -- have you ever had or do you currently have any contacts or communications with the then Trump campaign or now the Trump administration?

A No, sir.

Q How about similarly, did you have any contacts or communications with then the campaign for President for Hillary Clinton or the DNC?

A No, sir.

Q And have you ever performed any translation services that you would consider quote, unquote, political in nature under your employment?

A No. The bulk of my practice was financial translations and interpreting in New York.

Q Forgive me if I asked this already, but could you just tell me when was the last communication you had with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

A Mid-June 2017.

Q And since then nothing?

A No. Well, except the three calls that -- attempted calls from Mr. Katsyv. But I have not spoken with Ms. Veselnitskaya since May 15th, 2017.

Q And when was the last time you saw or heard from Mr. Simpson?

A I might be mistaken, but I don't think I actually met him after June 2016. He might have come up again in the case around the new year, 2017, but I don't remember specific meetings.

Q Fair enough. And lastly, do you have any recollection of having any communications or contacts with Mr. Simpson's associates Thomas Catan or Peter Fritsch?

A Say that again.

Q Sure. Do you recall having any interactions or communications with

either of Mr. Simpson's associates at Fusion, Thomas Catan or Peter Fritsch?

A No, I do not know those names.

[REDACTED] Thanks very much. Appreciate it.

Back to you.

[REDACTED] Off the record.

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. QUIGLEY: Thank you.

Let me -- your attorney mentioned we sort of skipped over something in the June 9th meeting. So let's take our time. The meeting begins, it's only about 20 minutes long. The first 2 minutes were taken up with pleasantries. And then Natalia speaks, correct?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: And she speaks for about 3 to 5 minutes?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. And the first thing she talks about is this -- well, what's the first issue she mentions?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't have like a precise recollection, sentence by sentence.

MR. QUIGLEY: No, I understand, but what was the topic?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think she introduced herself and said that she is a lawyer working in Moscow and she is involved in defending a case for a client. And then she talked about the research that she conducted in that case and that in her research she came out and found out about financial malfeasance.

MR. QUIGLEY: What was the kind of case that she was talking about in the first place, though?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: The case that she talked about was the case against Prevezon in the Southern District, the civil case.

MR. QUIGLEY: So she talked about that case and that in her research she came about information regarding something else?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Sir, I want to be as exact as I can. I don't remember if she mentioned the case specifically.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: But she might have. I just don't remember. I remember that basically the gist of what she said was what I described about the Ziff Brothers. And —

MR. QUIGLEY: In the course of investigating this case she discovered -- you said something about Mr. Browder?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: She did saying something about Mr. Browder, and she said that his investors, investors in his companies in Russia, were the Ziff Brothers, and that both Mr. Browder and Mr. Ziff, in her allegations, created a scheme not to pay taxes and avoid paying taxes and buying Russian assets improperly.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. Did she talk about the Magnitsky Act?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I have to say I don't remember.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. So when she was done speaking, she talked about her case, or some reference to the research that she was doing, and Mr. Browder and the Ziff Brothers, and then she stopped speaking. Who spoke next?

MR. KRANTZ: There was more to the conversation earlier.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay.

MR. KRANTZ: I just didn't the record to be --

MR. QUIGLEY: I get it.

So complete that part of it, then.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: So she did say that, according to her research, that the Ziff Brothers were donors to either DNC or the Clinton campaign. And I don't remember which one, but --

MR. QUIGLEY: I got that.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: -- but they were Democratic donors. And I think it was Mr. Manafort that interjected and said, well, this is not significant because people contribute to campaigns on either side all the time.

And my impression was that Ms. Veselnitskaya kind of lost her footing, so to speak -- again, I'm giving you my impression -- and Mr. --

MR. QUIGLEY: That's what I was asking for.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: -- Mr. Akhmetshin took the floor to step in and continue.

MR. QUIGLEY: Mr. Manafort said what he said. Did anyone -- before you get to that, did anyone else besides Mr. Manafort, did Mr. Kushner say anything or Don Jr. say anything or ask her or anyone else a question at that point?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't remember. And Mr. Donald Trump Jr. might have said or asked something which I don't remember precisely.

What I can give you exactly is that Mr. Kushner did not say anything at all during that time that he was present there. But Mr. Trump might have said something. What, I just don't remember.

MR. QUIGLEY: Yeah. Does the expression, it would have been approximate, "Where's the dirt?" come to mind, or something close to that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't remember anything like that.

MR. QUIGLEY: "Where's the information? What do you have?"

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, sir. I don't think he said anything like that. I don't remember him saying anything like that.

MR. QUIGLEY: Do you have any recollection at all as to what he generally was talking about after Mr. Manafort spoke?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I personally do not remember Mr. Donald Trump Jr. speaking beyond this parting phrase. I don't remember any specific remarks or questions.

MR. QUIGLEY: You said Mr. Manafort interjected. He was just making a statement. Did he ask for anything?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Oh, Mr. Manafort? No.

MR. QUIGLEY: Did he ask them for her, her or anyone else, for anything that you heard?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I'm sorry, I got confused.

MR. KRANTZ: I didn't understand the question either.

MR. QUIGLEY: You said Mr. Manafort interjected and said campaign contributions aren't that big a deal or something like that, correct? Did he say anything else or ask anyone else anything at that point?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That, I don't remember. I remember him saying that part and maybe something else and going to his device. And I don't think he spoke much or looked up much during the rest of the remainder of the time.

MR. QUIGLEY: You talk about your perception or what your impressions were of this. What was your understanding by being in that meeting of what Mr. Manafort or Mr. Trump Jr. wanted from the meeting, from what they said?

MR. KRANTZ: If you can gather from what they said.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: My general impression was that actually this whole thing was very aleatory and kind of -- aleatory, kind of random and haphazard. I don't think they really knew what to expect.

And they were very polite about it, you know, Mr. Donald Trump Jr. was, not so much Mr. Manafort. But I don't really -- I have never met those people before. I don't know what their expectations were.

I can tell you that in my reading, I think Ms. Veselnitskaya thought that she was bringing some sort of choice information that might have consequence. That is just my impression.

MR. QUIGLEY: And was your impression that that's what the meeting was about?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. I think she was a one-issue person. She had a case. And she was doing everything to kind of attack the predicate crime in that case, which was the Magnitsky law.

So I don't think it was specifically about the campaign. It was more -- again, this is my interpretation -- knocking on every door in town that will listen to her.

MR. QUIGLEY: And there were no questions following up what she said?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. QUIGLEY: When she finished speaking and you said Mr. Manafort -- I'm sorry.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Can I just say, not that I remember. There might have been, but, you know, it's been more than a year and a half. And I remember certain things, but I don't remember every detail. There might have been other

questions, but I don't recall them specifically.

MR. QUIGLEY: Right. When you testified earlier in the Senate about this matter, Mr. Manafort and Donald Jr. expressed disappointment with the content of the meeting. Is that accurate?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I --

MR. KRANTZ: What testimony are you referring to?

MR. QUIGLEY: I will just ask the question. Did Mr. Manafort or Donald Jr. express any disappointment with the content of the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Verbally? No.

MR. QUIGLEY: With -- did they express any disappointment verbally with the lack of discussion from her about Hillary Clinton and information about Hillary Clinton?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Not that I recall.

MR. QUIGLEY: So he is done. And who took over and took over after that and spoke?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: After Mr. Manafort's remarks?

MR. QUIGLEY: Yes. As his interjection, as you said?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: As I recall, it was Mr. Akhmetshin who took the floor.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. How long did he speak?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: For must have been the remainder of the meeting, maybe 10, maybe 12 minutes.

MR. QUIGLEY: And what did he talk about?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: He talked about -- broadly again, I wasn't following his speech specifically -- but he talked about HRAGIF, the foundation.

MR. QUIGLEY: About what?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: About the foundation, HRAGIF. About the efforts to bring congressional bureau investigation to the circumstance of Mr. Magnitsky's arrest. About the fact that there are about, as I recall, over 200 children that got stranded because of Putin's adoption ban and that this could be an excellent point to thaw the relationship between the United States and Russia, to try to correct Magitsky Act.

MR. QUIGLEY: He talked about repealing -- he talked about repealing the act?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, sir, it wasn't specifically the foundation. In my understanding it was never specifically about repealing the act. And I remember a discussion that, you know, that repealing the act is pointless and --

MR. QUIGLEY: He said that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: -- it's a better word.

I think it was a conversation of Ms. Veselnitskaya, who said: Of course I'm not going to try to overturn the act that punishes human rights violators. And she thought that some of the people on that list should have been punished.

MR. QUIGLEY: Was there any interaction with anyone else in the room when he was talking about Magnitsky Act?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Sir, I don't honestly have a specific recollection of the name Magnitsky Act being mentioned or like what was the gist of that discussion.

Broadly, it was about adoptions. Frankly, I kind of tuned out. I didn't have to work. I looked at the room. I looked at the view. I looked at the surroundings. And I did not exactly follow what he was saying. I don't remember

any active exchange between --

MR. QUIGLEY: No one asked him any questions?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: There might have been, but it was mostly his presentation, which was listened to politely.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. So he finished his presentation. Who speaks next?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I believe that it was Mr. Trump Jr. who basically said goodbye, thanked everyone, and said: This is over, thank you very much for coming.

MR. SWALWELL: The email that I showed you earlier, 2 days before Mr. Goldstone tells Natalia: "I have confirmed a meeting for you both at 3 p.m." Do you see that sentence, at the very bottom?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And your testimony to us is that it was only 2 days later that you were told that you would be at the meeting.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Natalia tell you when you were in the car if she had already told Mr. Goldstone that you were coming? Did you understand -- what I'm trying to clear up here is that it appears on June 7th that your appearance is already confirmed. But your testimony to us is that you didn't know about your appearance until June 9th.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That's correct.

MR. SWALWELL: And your testimony is you don't remember if Natalia had -- or Natalia did not express to you that she already told Mr. Goldstone you were going to be there.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Were there any documents presented at the June 9th meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't remember any documents when the news broke out and this became a public discussion. And then I read Mr. Akhmetshin's interview that there was a folder. And I remember the folder at the restaurant visually. It was a white plastic folder. But I don't remember it at the conference room at the Trump Tower meeting. And I don't remember whether it was left there. I don't think it was opened in any way.

MR. SWALWELL: When you say folder, your counsel has what appears to be a folder, I have what appears to be a binder, can you just distinguish?

MR. KRANTZ: I have a notebook.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It was a white plastic folder which usually people insert pages for presentations. There might have been 10 or 12 pages in it.

MR. SWALWELL: Was it in English or Russian?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't know. I never -- I just remember the white folder being on the corner of the table in the restaurant.

MR. SWALWELL: Was there a title to the folder, any print?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't remember, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: And from the restaurant to Trump Tower, how did you get there? Was it by car or by foot?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I remember us going by foot.

MR. SWALWELL: And you certainly don't think that she would have left the folder at the table, right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No. And again, usually she had two bags. She

had sort of a briefcase with documents and I would often end up carrying it for her. But no.

MR. SWALWELL: And she carried her bags into Trump Tower?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And did she take anything out of her bags when she sat down at the conference table?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That I don't remember.

MR. SWALWELL: So it's possible that she could have?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: It is possible that she could have also left documents behind for the participants of the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see Ivanka Trump?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: When you did you see her?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I saw her while we were waiting to be ushered into the room. She passed through the lobby.

MR. SWALWELL: Before the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see her after the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: What was Mr. Kushner doing during the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: My recollection is that he came a little bit after we sat down. He wasn't there during the meet and greet, as I recall. And then he sat and listened, and then got up and left.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you describe his body language?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't recall. He was just casually sitting and listening.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you describe the body language of Paul Manafort or what he was doing?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That was kind of, I thought, a bit rude, because after his remark he half turned and sat with his side and with his phone or whatever device right here. And it was clear that he was not kind of paying attention or half paying attention to what was going on.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you describe the body language of Donald Trump Jr.?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It might sound old fashioned, but I found him very well mannered. He was a perfect host, was attentive, but nothing unusual.

MR. SWALWELL: And just to be clear, the meeting concluded with Donald Trump Jr. essentially saying: We will revisit this issue if my father is elected President.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: If or when. I don't remember which, but something along those lines.

MR. SWALWELL: Now, you had just been in a meeting at Trump Tower at the peak of a Presidential campaign with the son of the Presidential candidate. That's a pretty exciting event, right? Just in the arc of someone's life that's something that --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: -- is memorable.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Of course.

MR. SWALWELL: Who did you tell outside of that group about that meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No one.

MR. SWALWELL: You didn't tell your family?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Why not?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I try to separate my work from my private life. And, you know, in my business I interpreted for a lot of high-level people.

MR. SWALWELL: But you're at Trump Tower with the son of the candidate. Didn't tell anyone?

MR. KRANTZ: As an interpreter, he's supposed to keep things confidential.

MR. SWALWELL: Didn't tell anyone?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, no.

MR. SWALWELL: You said that you did tell eventually your family?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: When was that?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Well, after the news broke out on July 8th, I told my wife about that.

MR. KRANTZ: Those are privileged communications.

MR. SWALWELL: You mentioned going to Moscow in the spring of 2017 --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: -- with Natalia.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It wasn't with Natalia.

MR. SWALWELL: I'm sorry. She had arranged it?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Was she there?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see Rinat in Moscow in spring of 2017?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see Congressman Dana Rohrabacher?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever met with Congressman Dana Rohrabacher?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Has his name ever came up with Rinat or Natalia?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: In what context?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: They told me that and I was aware from my interpreting and translation work that Rinat met with him in the early days of late July or early June and he was trying --

MR. SWALWELL: 2016?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes. So the foundation was trying do a screening of this movie at the Freedom Museum. So his name came up.

And I also, I think, I was aware of his trip to Russia. I don't remember when it happened, but I remember hearing a conversation in the context of the foundation that Mr. Rohrabacher was in Moscow with a congressional delegation.

MR. SWALWELL: Was that prior to the June 9th meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I believe so. I believe it was either in the winter

or in the spring of 2016. But I'm not certain.

MR. SWALWELL: You mentioned that you never would socialize with Ms. Veselnitskaya. Is that right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I didn't say that. We had dinners.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. I just wanted --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: We had drinks. You know, she invited -- she celebrated her birthday and she invited a whole bunch of people who worked with her. So there were social occasions and she was very friendly and very hospitable.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you take any notes during the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you see anybody else take notes?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No --

MR. SWALWELL: June 9th meeting I'm talking about.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: It's kind of we're going into a gray area which I seem to remember somebody sitting next to Mr. Manafort and taking notes, but I don't remember who that was or whether it was somebody who was introduced, and I don't have a precise recollection.

MR. SWALWELL: Well, just to go through your exhibit, you marked AS, and that's yourself, Right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That's correct, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: You marked V, and that's Ms. Veselnitskaya?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: You marked RA.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Rinat Akhmetshin.

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MR. SWALWELL: You marked K. Is that Mr. Kushner?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That is Mr. Kushner, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: You marked PM?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That's Paul Manafort.

MR. SWALWELL: And you marked DTjr.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Donald Trump Jr.

MR. SWALWELL: So the only individuals that you did not mark who you have described to us as being at the meeting were Ike and Mr. Goldstone. Is that right?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes. Here's the thing. They might perfectly well have been here, but being under oath, I can't swear remembering them being there.

MR. SWALWELL: Is it possible that, in addition to Ike and Mr. Goldstone, that there was another person in the meeting that you don't recall?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think it is. I think it is. I do not recall that person, but somehow -- and again, in this process I am recalling things more visually, and I have a visual recollection of someone sitting next to Mr. Manafort, but again, I could have been -- I could be mistaken. I can't swear to it.

MR. SWALWELL: And in your recollection, do you mean it's somebody who was not affiliated with your group who had come in with the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you remember if the person was a male or a female?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I think it was a male. It's just again --

MR. KRANTZ: If it was a person.

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MR. SAMOCHORNOV: If it was a person.

MR. SWALWELL: I understand.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I seem to -- my recollection is that there was somebody from the staff, somebody else from the Trump staff that came in. And maybe that person came in and left at the introductions, but I have this vague recollection of somebody being next to Mr. Manafort.

MR. SWALWELL: And you remember that person taking notes.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: That's, again, not a precise memory, and I wouldn't want to put it like --

MR. SWALWELL: I understand.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: -- under oath. But I seem to have a recollection of several other people being there besides whom I remember exactly.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you remember anyone else besides this person --

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: -- being there? And do you remember whether this person said anything at all?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Definitely not, nothing was said.

MR. SWALWELL: And if we go through just around the table, the only people that I have noted that you are testifying spoke would be Ms. Veselnitskaya, you for Ms. Veselnitskaya, Mr. Donald Trump Jr., Mr. Akhmetshin.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Mr. Akhmetshin, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: And Mr. Manafort.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Correct.

MR. SWALWELL: So Mr. Kushner didn't speak.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. Goldstone did not speak.

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Did Ike speak?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't recall. He might have, but I don't have recollection.

MR. SWALWELL: What was Ms. Veselnitskaya's feelings about going public with the meeting when you spoke to her this year prior to it being disclosed in July. You mentioned that you had talked to her about the meeting. How did she feel about or did she express an opinion at all about whether it should be public?

MR. KRANTZ: I think the question is, did she express an opinion?

MR. SWALWELL: Did she have an opinion about whether or not you should tell the public or tell somebody that this meeting had occurred?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: I don't remember conversation being framed that way. She didn't concern herself with this being -- with her going public with this meeting. She was reacting to my suggestion that if the information about this meeting will get into the press that would create a lot of publicity for her.

MR. SWALWELL: You were worried for her?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Basically, yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Why were you worried?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Well, you know, I felt at that time that there was a lot of publicity already that was negatively affecting her. And, you know, I felt some certain sympathy towards her and her client and their cause.

MR. SWALWELL: Did she ask you to not say anything about the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know if she asked anyone else not to say anything about the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: Not that I am aware of.

MR. SWALWELL: And once the meeting was publicly disclosed, did you talk to her?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: I just want to be clear. [REDACTED] asked you about Glenn Simpson. Did you ever observe Mr. Simpson and Ms. Veselnitskaya discuss the June 9th meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: And I mean prior to the meeting and after the meeting?

MR. SAMOCHORNOV: No.

MR. SWALWELL: I don't have anything else.

[REDACTED] Thanks very much. We're adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:13 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

